Freeview Play or Freesat? The better recorder depends on your TV setup

Compare Manhattan T4-R 1TB Freeview Play 4K TV Recorder vs HUMAX HDR-1100S 500 GB Freesat with Freetime HD TV Recorder - Black for UK homes.

	Manhattan T4-R 1TB Freeview Play 4K TV Recorder	HUMAX HDR-1100S 500 GB Freesat with Freetime HD TV...
Image		
Price	**£229.00**	£338.99
Rating	**4.4/5**	4.2/5
Reviews	1332	**1908**

Products Featured in This Guide

Manhattan T4-R 1TB Freeview Play 4K TV Recorder

£229.00 4.4★

HUMAX HDR-1100S 500 GB Freesat with Freetime HD TV Recorder - Black

£338.99 4.2★

Display There is no built-in display or screen on either product, so this category is really about picture quality and output support. On that basis, the Manhattan T4-R wins for most buyers because it is the more modern 4K-capable recorder. It supports Freeview Play and UHD output, which makes it the better match for newer TVs and future-proofing, even though many UK broadcast channels still air in HD or SD. The HUMAX HDR-1100S is limited to HD Freesat, so it cannot match the Manhattan's 4K-ready positioning. If your TV is 4K and you want a box that feels current, Manhattan takes this round.

Performance Performance is where the Manhattan T4-R pulls ahead clearly. It is the newer platform, and the combination of Freeview Play plus 1TB storage suggests a more capable all-round experience for recording, catch-up and app integration. The extra storage matters in day-to-day use: 1TB gives you roughly double the capacity of the HUMAX's 500GB drive, so you can keep far more series recordings without constantly deleting old content. The HUMAX HDR-1100S is still a solid recorder and has a strong reputation, backed by 1,909 reviews, but it is an older design and its 500GB capacity is modest by today's standards. For families, heavy recorders, or anyone who likes to stockpile drama series and box sets, Manhattan wins on performance and usability.

Build quality and design Both brands are well known in the UK TV-recorder market, and both products have plenty of customer history behind them. HUMAX has the edge in proven reliability perception, reflected in its larger review count and 4.2/5 rating from 1,909 reviews. That said, the Manhattan T4-R scores higher overall at 4.4/5 from 1,328 reviews, which suggests a slightly stronger satisfaction level among owners. In practical design terms, the Manhattan is the more modern product, while the HUMAX feels like a classic, no-nonsense Freesat recorder. If you value a more up-to-date feature set and slightly better user sentiment, Manhattan wins. If you prefer the reassurance of a long-established Freesat box with a very large review base, HUMAX is still respectable.

Battery life Neither product has a battery, so this category does not apply. For a TV recorder, the equivalent consideration is power use and always-on convenience. Both are mains-powered set-top boxes designed to sit under your TV and do their job in the background. There is no meaningful winner here.

Price and value for money The HUMAX HDR-1100S is cheaper at £294.99, while the Manhattan T4-R costs £305.09, a difference of just £10.10. That small saving is not enough to outweigh the Manhattan's bigger 1TB storage, 4K-ready positioning, and stronger rating. In value terms, Manhattan offers more for almost the same money. The HUMAX is only the better value if you specifically need Freesat and do not care about extra storage or newer platform features. For most buyers, the Manhattan gives the better bang for your buck.

Game library/features These are not gaming devices, so there is no game library to compare. The meaningful feature comparison is platform support, recording capacity, and catch-up integration. Manhattan wins because Freeview Play combines live TV, recordings and on-demand catch-up from UK broadcasters in one place, and the 1TB drive makes it more flexible for larger households. HUMAX's Freesat with Freetime is also a strong UK TV solution, especially in satellite-only homes, but the 500GB limit is the main drawback. If you want the richer feature set, Manhattan is the stronger package.

Overall user experience The best user experience depends on your signal source, but for most cord-cutters the Manhattan T4-R is the more compelling buy. It has the higher rating, more storage, 4K support, and the more modern Freeview Play ecosystem. That makes it better suited to viewers who want a simple, future-friendly recorder for terrestrial TV. The HUMAX HDR-1100S still has a place if you rely on a satellite dish, live in an area where Freeview reception is poor, or specifically want Freesat's channel line-up. But for the average UK household choosing purely on product merits, the Manhattan feels like the more complete and better-value recorder.

Overall summary: The Manhattan T4-R 1TB is the winner for most people because it offers more storage, better future-proofing, and a higher customer rating for only £10.10 more. The HUMAX HDR-1100S remains a sensible buy for Freesat households, but its older platform and smaller 500GB drive make it less compelling unless satellite TV is essential. If you have an aerial and want the best all-round recorder, choose Manhattan. If you need Freesat, choose HUMAX.

Winner: a

The Manhattan T4-R 1TB is the better overall buy for most UK viewers. It costs only £10.10 more, yet gives you double the storage, a higher 4.4/5 rating, and 4K-ready Freeview Play support. That makes it the stronger long-term choice unless you specifically need Freesat via satellite. The HUMAX is still good, but it is harder to justify at nearly the same price with half the storage.

Buy Product A If...

Buy Product A if you use an aerial and want the most future-proof recorder with plenty of space for series recordings. It is also the better choice if you have a 4K TV and want a box that feels more modern and better-rated by users. For most Freeview households, this is the smarter purchase.

Buy Product B If...

Buy Product B if your home relies on a satellite dish or you cannot get reliable Freeview reception. It is also worth considering if you strongly prefer Freesat's channel setup and want to save the £10.10. In other words, choose this only if Freesat is the platform you need, not because it is the better all-round value.

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